## Canadian & Nova Scotia Refugee Tract 1788

## The Revolutionary War

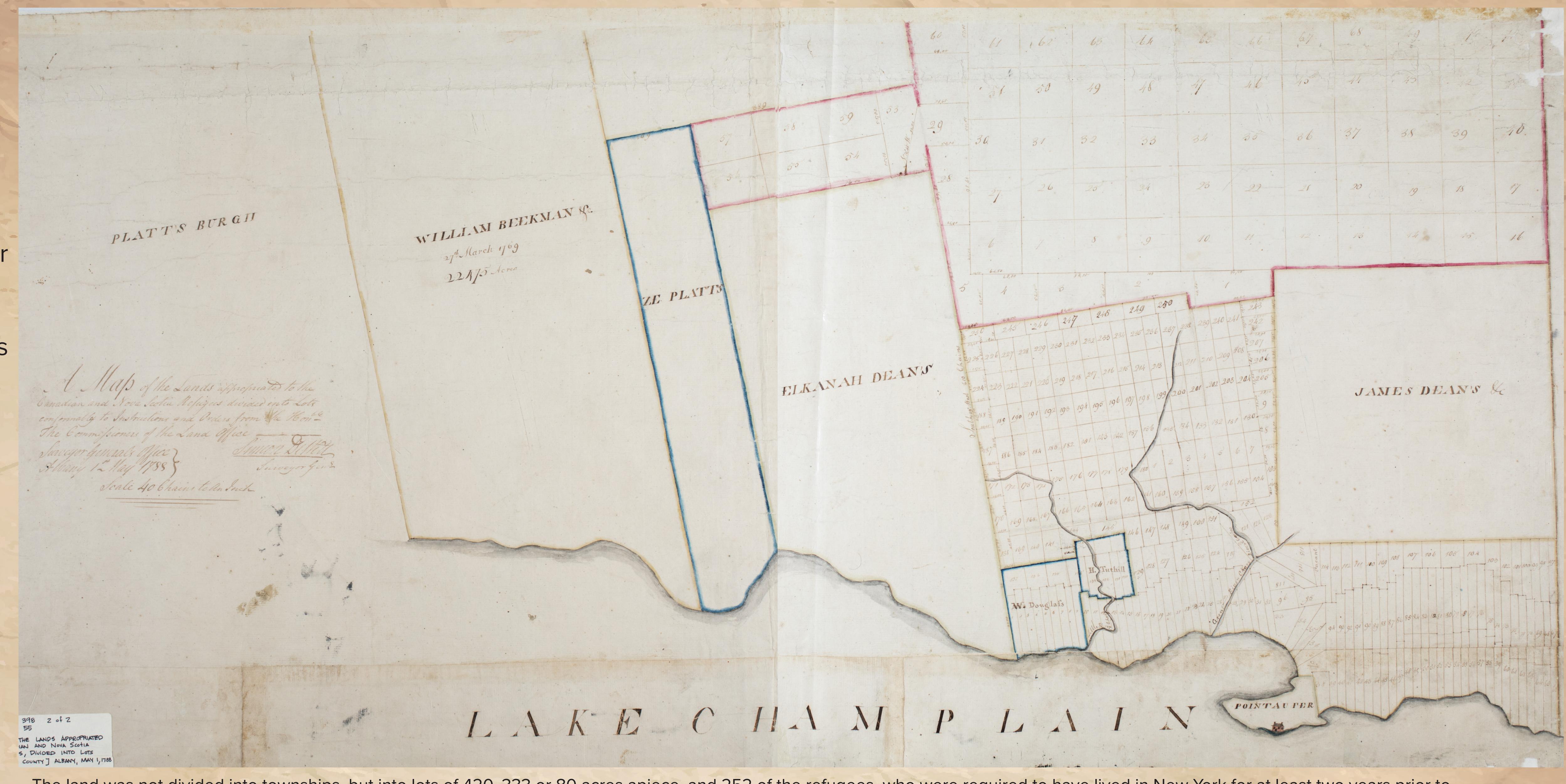
During a failed attempt by the Continental Army to take Quebec from the British during the Revolutionary War, several residents of Canada and Nova Scotia who were subjects of King George found themselves sympathetic to the American cause. When the Patriots withdrew their forces in 1776, they were joined in what is now Clinton County by hundreds of French Canadian refugees who had supported the American rebels and would have faced serious repercussions had they stayed in their homes.

When New York State enacted Chapter 63 of the Laws of 1784, it directed the surveyor general to "lay out such a number of townships of unappropriated and unoccupied lands for the Canadian and Nova Scotia refugees." The entire 231,540-acre tract was in Clinton County, including a section along the shore of Lake Champlain.

## Point au Fer

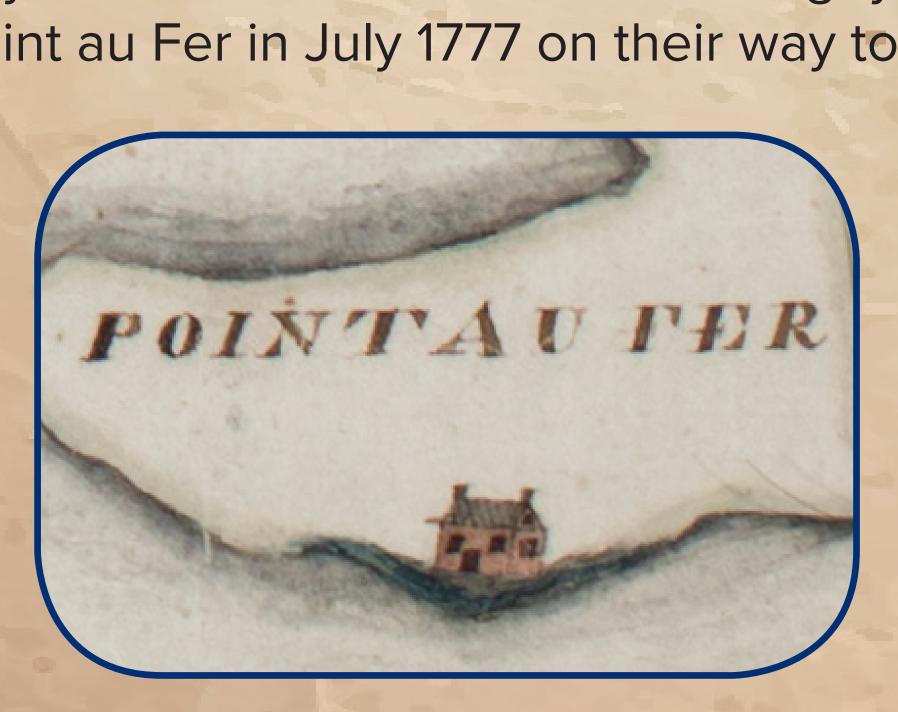


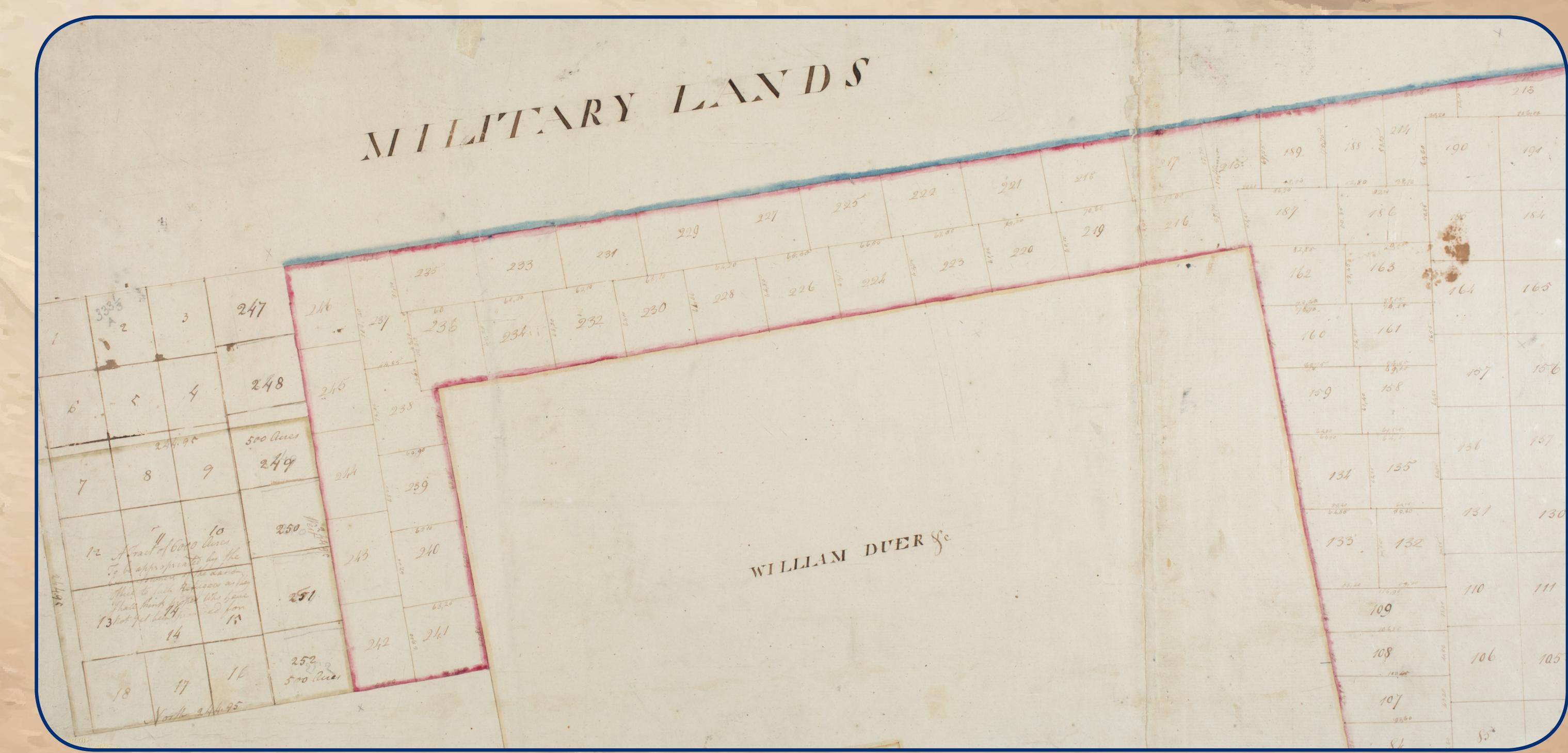
The waterfront structure included on this map is located on a peninsula in Lake Champlain that history buffs in the region consider to be one of the most historic sites in Clinton County, Point au Fer in the town of Champlain. By the time the structure, a stone garrison called the "White House," was built by the British in 1774, the area had already seen its fair share of skirmishes during the French and Indian War, including the famous Rogers' Rangers' clashes with French forces.



The land was not divided into townships, but into lots of 420, 333 or 80 acres apiece, and 252 of the refugees, who were required to have lived in New York for at least two years prior to November 1, 1782, established their claims.

During the Revolutionary War, control of the garrison switched between the American and British armies several times, and American General John Sullivan fortified the site in 1776 with an entrenchment and a 12-foot stockade lined with cannons. The site was a stopping point for Benjamin Franklin, Benedict Arnold, Charles Carroll, and Ethan Allen. During a period of British control, roughly half of British General John Burgoyne's army camped on Point au Fer in July 1777 on their way to defeat in Saratoga.





As the time allotted for refugees to make their claims ended, very little of the land was occupied, and the greater part of the Refugee Tract reverted to the state.